

You know, when my father signed the ADA into law in 1990, he said, “We must not and will not rest until every man and woman with a dream has the means to achieve it.” Today we renew that commitment, and we continue to work for an America where individuals are celebrated for their abilities, not judged by their disabilities.

Again, I want to welcome you all here. I want to thank those who were pioneers in this landmark legislation for being here to celebrate this anniversary. I am now pleased to sign a proclamation in honor of the 12th anniversary of the Americans with Disability Act. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:47 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

### **Proclamation 7579—Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 2002**

July 26, 2002

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is one of the most compassionate and successful civil rights laws in American history. In the 12 years since President George H.W. Bush signed the ADA into law, more people with disabilities are participating fully in our society than ever before. As we mark this important anniversary, we celebrate the positive effect this landmark legislation has had upon our Nation, and we recognize the important influence it has had in improving employment opportunities, government services, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications for those with disabilities.

Today, Americans with disabilities enjoy greatly improved access to countless facets of life; but more work needs to be done. We must continue to build on the important foundations established by the ADA. Too many Americans with disabilities remain isolated, dependent, and deprived of the tools they need to enjoy all that our Nation has to offer.

My Administration is committed to removing the barriers that prevent people with disabilities from realizing their full potential and achieving their dreams. The New Freedom Initiative, which I announced last year, builds on the hopeful path of the ADA. It provides Americans with disabilities increased access to assistive technologies, expands educational options, and increases opportunities for them to integrate into our workforce. We are committed to ensuring the delivery of vital services to disabled persons in an integrated, community-based setting.

My Administration will continue to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act, and we will work with businesses and State and local governments to increase partnerships that promote the purposes of the ADA. Together, we are working for a day when all people with disabilities are able to live and work with dignity, freedom, and independence and realize their potential as fully integrated members of our society.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim July 26, 2002, as a day in celebration of the 12th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I call upon public officials, business leaders, people with disabilities, and all Americans to pursue the ADA’s full promise of equal opportunity and to celebrate the expanded freedom that the ADA has brought to American life.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:52 a.m., July 29, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 30.

### Exchange With Reporters Following a Meeting With the House Republican Conference

July 26, 2002

#### **Legislative Agenda**

**Q.** How are you doing, Mr. President?

**Q.** Would you talk for a moment, please, sir?

**Q.** Mr. President, what did you tell the conference today?

**The President.** You know, it's been an amazing week. A lot has gotten done here in the Congress, and I want to thank both the Republicans and Democrats. I think—I know the American people expect their elected Representatives to work together to get some things done, get the homeland security bill. We're even going to get trade promotion authority, which will be good for jobs and American workers. We've got a corporate responsibility bill. It's a good piece of legislation, overwhelmingly supported by both Republicans and Democrats.

The American people saw last week that this administration and the Justice Department will track down those—prosecute those CEOs who break the law. We're making good progress here. I want to thank the Members of the House; I talked to them about how pleased I am with the progress we're making.

**Q.** What about prescription drugs on the Senate side, sir?

**The President.** Well, we'll see what comes out. [*Inaudible*—prescription drugs and Medicare. I've said that since I became the President, and we'll see what happens.

Right now I'm focused on the trade vote. We're going to get a free trade agreement, which is very important for jobs and workers, very important for our farmers and ranchers, and it's very important for our economy. We're going to get a good homeland security bill. And as you know, we've got a good corporate responsibility in a bipartisan bill.

So a lot has taken place here, and I'm real proud of the Members of both parties.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:35 p.m. at the Capitol. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

### Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation To Create a Department of Homeland Security

July 26, 2002

I commend the House of Representatives for acting quickly to pass landmark legislation to create a Homeland Security Department. This legislation represents the most extensive reorganization of the Federal Government since the 1940s. Our Nation needs a new department with the overriding mission of protecting the American people from the threats of terrorism.

This bill includes the major components of my proposal—providing for intelligence analysis and infrastructure protection, strengthening our borders, improving the use of science and technology to counter weapons of mass destruction, and enhancing our preparedness and response capabilities.

The House bill also provides the Secretary of Homeland Security managerial flexibility needed to build and maintain a department capable of responding rapidly to the terrorist threats of the 21st century.

The House has shown a strong commitment to improving the security of the American people, and I urge the Senators to do the same before they leave for the August recess.

### Proclamation 7578—National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 2002

July 26, 2002

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Fifty-two years ago, armed forces from North Korea shattered the peace as they crossed the 38th Parallel and invaded South Korea. A 22-country force assembled to face this Cold War challenge, and the majority of them were Americans. The brave men and women of this coalition fought courageously to defend a population facing tyranny and aggression, and they succeeded in defeating the invading forces.